DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 092 901 CS 001 174

AUTHOR Boehnlein, Mary Maher; Gans, Thomas G.
TITLE Competency in Teaching Reading of Fieldbased and On-Campus Students at Cleveland State University.
PUB DATE May 74
NOTE 10p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association (19th, New Orleans, Louisiana, May 1-4, 1974)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS College Students; *Educational Research; Elementary Education; *Performance Based Teacher Education; *Preservice Education; *Reading Instruction; Reading Skills; *Teacher Qualifications; Teaching Models
IDENTIFIERS *Cleveland State University

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine if students in a field-based program performed significantly better on a test of ability to assess and to teach specific reading skills than students enrolled in on-campus reading methods courses which employed the same textual materials and different amounts of field experiences with children. The subjects in both the field-based and on-campus programs met the same set of criteria for admission to the College of Education, but the participants for the field-centered program were selected from a pool of applicants on the basis of personal interviews. All subjects were administered the Harp and Wallen Competency in Teaching Reading Test--Form A as a pretest and Form B as a posttest--which accompanies the basic testbook used in preservice education courses. The results support the contention that intensive field experience with children in a school setting contributes to competence in teaching reading, especially in diagnostic and prescriptive teaching techniques. (RB)

ED 092901

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Mary Maher Boehnlein, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Early Childhood Education
and
Thomas G. Gans, Ph.D.
Director, Student Personnel Services
The Cleveland State University
College of Education
Euclid and East 22nd Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44115

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Mary Maher Boehnlein
Thomas G. Gans
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

COMPETENCY IN TEACHING READING OF FIELDBASED AND ON-CAMPUS STUDENTS AT CLEVELAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Research Report
10:45 - 11:45 a.m.
Thursday, May 2, 1974
Nineteenth Annual Convention
International Reading Association
New Orleans, Louisiana

CS 001 174

Competency based (or performance based) and field based teacher education programs are being instituted on many campuses in the United States. These programs are attempts to improve pre-service teacher education programs by asking students to exhibit behaviors assumed to promote pupil learning and to give students earlier and more varied experiences with children.

These reforms in teacher education are based on the belief that they will provide individualized instruction, be efficient, provide an objective basis for student evaluation, and ultimately produce more competent teachers than the programs they replace (4,2). At this time, these beliefs are not based on research evidence. A cursory review of the literature reveals writer after writer describing the advantages of competency based, performance based, or field based teacher education programs, but presenting no empirical evidence to substantiate their positions (Attea, 1, Flanders, 5, Massanari, 9, McCarty, 10, Merwin, 11, Rosner, 12, Shirmer, 13, and Sinatra, 14).

A review of Dissertation Abstracts 1861-1973 located two studies providing empirical data to support field based programs. Coon (3) studied only the perceptions of junior high students of student teachers who were participating in a field centered program. James (8) found pre-service secondary teachers were more effective in nine teaching behaviors and displayed "better" attitudes toward their college methods courses than non-field participating students.

Only one study relative to a field based approach in a pre-service reading methods course was located. Wylie (15) reported that college students appear to learn greater skill, without direct teaching, when they are actively involved in learning their methodology. He used informal skill tests as the method to assess the college student's teaching skills.

It is evident that there is a need for research of the newer models of teacher education to determine if they are, in fact, more efficient or more effective than those they would replace. The study reported in this paper was an attempt to determine if students in a field based program performed significantly better on a test of ability to assess and to teach specific reading skills than students enrolled in on-campus reading methods courses which employed the same textual materials and different amounts of field experiences with children.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The Cleveland State University College of Education has had, for some time, a field experience component in most of its elementary school teaching methods courses. Additionally, during the past three years, a number of students have been enrolled in two special training programs linked with differentiated staffing projects in the city school systems of Mentor and Parma, Ohio. Both systems are experimenting with differentiated staffing, open space learning areas, and individualized instructional techniques in combination. One of these projects, that is, Parma, provided a sample of students with which to examine the effect of direct involvement in the field on acquisition of specific skills for teaching reading.

PROCEDURE

Choice of Subjects

All subjects of this study, whether in the "control" groups or in the groups involved in field centered work, met the same set of criteria for admission to the College of Education. Participants for the field centered program were selected from a pool of applicants on the basis of personal interviews with faculty of the university and of the Parma schools.

From these interviews, judgements were made about the suitability of applicants for the particular situation in which placement would be made. This selection represents a serious source of potential bias in the sampling; and, unfortunately, data are not available to provide reassurance about the comparability of the two basic treatment groups (field-centered and on-campus) other than the pre-test scores on the criterion. Thus, it is a necessary assumption of this study that the instructional groups were comparable on relevant factors except those specifically controlled by the study design, i.e., past teaching experience and type of instruction.

Approaches to Instruction

Three groups of students were enrolled in on-campus sections of reading methods during the summer and fall of 1972. Collectively, these three groups comprise the control group for this study. One of these three (Group A) was composed of experienced teachers, isolated post hoc from the on-campus groups in order to assess the possible effect of previous teaching experiences on skill acquisition. Two additional groups were enrolled in the field based program during the 1972-73 and 1973-74 school years respectively. (See Table 2).

All groups were taught by the same instructor. The same basic textbook was used with all groups, Competency in Teaching Reading by Harp and Wallen (6). All students completed mini case studies of individual children identified as having reading problems. In addition, each student viewed films, evaluated and examined developmental and supplementary reading materials for instruction, engaged in large and small group discussions, listened to lectures, and conferred individually with the instructor.

Differences in method between the groups were the larger amount of time spent in the traditional class meeting time by the on-campus groups and the amount of time spent working directly with children whether on-campus or in an elementary school setting. Summer school students received simulated experiences doing microteaching with videotaping using elementary school children. On-campus students, during the regular academic year, spent four hours per week for eight weeks in field experience in an inner city elementary school. One half of their time was spent observing and assisting an elementary teacher in the classroom and the other half was spent testing and tutoring an individual child from the same classroom. Each on-campus student was observed working with children twice during the academic quarter by the instructor.

Students in Groups D and E spent their entire junior year as part of a teaching team in one of three elementary schools in a large suburban city school system.* They performed a variety of noninstructional and instructional tasks which lead them to increasing responsibility for instruction of children. They had experience with three different age levels of children and return during their senior year for an eleven week, all day student teaching experience. The majority of their methods courses were taught on site. During their junior year, the methods professors attempted to see every student at least once every two weeks. For reading, language arts, and the children's literature courses, students were observed or had an individual conference with the professor once every

* The writers are indebted to the administration and staff of the Parma, Ohio schools for their cooperation in this research.

week to insure equivalent contact time with the professor as the on-campus groups.

TREATMENT OF THE DATA

All students were administered the Harp and Wallen Competency in Teaching Reading Test (6);Form A as a pretest and Form B as a posttest. (See Tables 1 and 2) The test accompanies the basic textbook used in the course and measures reading teaching abilities, that is, those skills needed in order to determine and provide for children's individual reading-skill needs, regardless of the reading method being used. It consists of testing and teaching word recognition and comprehension skill needs and deciding upon appropriate instruction. The authors report the test is fairly reliable (reliability coefficient (r) equal .72).

Pretest scores were examined using a one way analysis of variance (7). The analysis revealed there were no significant differences among the group means. (See Table 1)

TABLE I. PRETEST RESULTS

Source of Variance	Sums of Squares	d.f.	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Between Groups	10.3730	4	2.593	0.3539 n.s.
Within Groups	571.4343	78	7.326	
Total	581.8073	82		

Upon completion of the course requirements, the posttest was administered. (See Table 2) The analysis of variance (Table 3) shows that the five groups have significantly different criterion scores. To amplify this finding, planned comparisons of group means were calculated to examine two sources of the overall group differences; a possible difference

in means between experienced and inexperienced on-campus groups and a possible difference between means for on-campus instruction and for field-based instruction.

The first planned comparisons indicated no differences in means among the on-campus groups, whether experienced or not ($F_{1,78}$=0.319n.s.). The second comparison indicated clearly a difference significant at the $\alpha < .05$ level between the average mean scores of on-campus and field-based groups ($F_{1,78}$= 10.878). This difference favors the field-based groups.

TABLE 2
SUMMARY OF POST-TEST DATA

Group	Description	N	Mean	Variance
A	Experienced, on-campus	17	14.00	13.38
B	Inexperienced, on-campus Summer, 1972	15	14.27	22.78
C	Inexperienced, on-campus Fall, 1972	14	14.87	13.98
D	Inexperienced, field-based Fall, 1972	15	16.00	11.57
E	Inexperienced, field-based Fall, 1973	21	17.62	12.45

TABLE 3
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE POST-TEST MEANS

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	d.f.	Mean Squares	F-ratio
Between Groups	165.104	4	41.276	2.631 *
Within Groups	1223.619	78	15.687	
Total	1388.723	82		

* $F_{.05(4,78)}$ = 2.48

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study appear to support the contention that intensive field experience with children in a school setting contributes to competence in teaching reading as measured by the Harp and Wallen tests. Field-based students completing the same reading methods course requirements as on-campus groups, but having extensive experiences with elementary teaching teams of teachers and with pupils, seem to gain more knowledge of diagnostic and prescriptive teaching techniques in the teaching of reading.

This effect may be the result of differences in motivation related to the on-going responsibilities of field-based students for the learning of the children with whom they work. The students had continuing responsibility for the children and hence may have perceived a personal need to learn more about teaching reading than students from the on-campus groups who did not have such responsibility. The effect also could be the result of the difference in amount of field experience between the treatment and control groups; i.e. the gain is the product of additional practice.

Some biasing factors which might have affected the results include the possible selection of more highly motivated students for the field based group than for others and the possibility of a Hawthorne Effect among these students resulting from their selection for placement in a special teacher training project.

It is evident that there is a need for additional research to determine if field-based programs produce different learning effects than on-campus courses along teaching skill dimensions other than those included in this study. Another question to be researched is whether field-based teachers

are different from traditionally educated teachers during student teaching or after their first year in the profession. Yet another issue worthy of examination is that of whether teachers prepared in field-based programs are more likely than others to remain in teaching. These questions, in part, are being studied by the Field Development Team of the Cleveland State University College of Education and will be reported elsewhere.

REFERENCES

1. Attea, M. "Teacher Education in Reading and Language Arts: Undergraduate Urban Teacher Education Program (UUTEP) Competency-based Program, Lackawanna, New York," Reading Teacher, 27 (November 1973), 138-41.

2. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. "Innovation: An Ongoing Process," Educational Leadership, 30 (March 1973), Entire Issue.

3. Coon, George. "An Assessment of the Change in the Learning Environment As Perceived by Junior High Students Whose Teachers are Participating in a Field Centered Program," Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, Oregon State University, 1972. Dissertation Abstracts, 33/05-A, p. 2213.

4. Elam, Stanley. A Resume of Performance Based Teacher Education: What is The State of the Art? Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1972.

5. Flanders, N. (ed). "Basic Teaching Skills: Symposium," Journal of Teacher Education, 24 (Spring 1973) 3-43, 135-51.

6. Harp, William and Wallen, Carl. Instructor's Guide to Competency in Teaching Reading and The First R Readings on Teaching Reading. Chicago: Science Research Associates, Inc., 1972.

7. Hays, William L. Statistics for Psychologists. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963, 356-375, 462-477.

8. James, Larry W. "An Assessment of the Teacher-Assisting Component of the Nebraska University Secondary Teacher Education Program." Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1973. Dissertation Abstracts, 34/05, p. 2451-A.

9. Massanari, K. (ed). "Performance-Based Teacher Education: Symposium," Journal of Teacher Education, 24 (Fall, 1973), 179-249.

10. McCarty, D. J. "Competency Based Teacher Education" School Management 17 (October 1973) 30.

11. Merwin, W.C. And Templeton, R. "Methods Courses in the Field," Clearing House, 48 (November 1973) 159-62.

12. Rosner, B. "Promise of Competency-based Teacher Education," Education Digest, 39 (Summer 1973) 25-28.

13. Shimer, S. S. "Integrated Professional Year Program: TTT Projects," Contemporary Education, 44 (May 1973) 363-71.

14. Sinatra, L.J. "Performance Based Teacher Education: It Can Be Transformational," Education Technology, 13 (August 1973) 60-63.

15. Wylie, Richard. "Implementation and Evaluation of Two Experience Approaches to the Teaching of Reading Methodology," Newark: Abstracts Fifteenth Annual Convention, International Reading Association, 1970, 82.